

**DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY AND VETERANS AFFAIRS
FY 2014-15 JOINT BUDGET COMMITTEE HEARING AGENDA**

Wednesday, November 13, 2013

1:30 pm – 3:30 pm

1:30-1:45 INTRODUCTIONS AND OPENING COMMENTS

1:45-2:00 WESTERN SLOPE VETERANS' CEMETERY

1. Please identify the sources of gifts, grants, and donations received by the Western Slope Veterans' Cemetery Fund including details on the cause of decreased revenues in recent years and any efforts the Department has made to solicit donations from private sources.

The primary funding source of gifts, grants, and donations is private/local donations and the tax check-off. This funding source has decreased in recent years. The Department believes that several factors are responsible including the passing of WWII veterans and their family members, the drawdown in public awareness of current military efforts and the slow-down of the economy.

The Department does not solicit donations at this time. The Department is contemplating working with community stakeholders to develop a "Friends of the Cemetery" type group to attempt to increase gifts, grants and donations.

2. Please provide an overview of the policy of the Department regarding burial of veterans, spouses, dependents, and non-veterans at the Western Slope Veterans' Cemetery. Include details on the number of non-qualifying veterans that have applied to be buried at the Cemetery. Also, indicate how this policy relates to other Veterans Administration policies regarding veterans' cemeteries and if the policies are consistent to all facilities.

"Cemeteries established under the grant program must conform to the standards and guidelines pertaining to site selection, planning and construction prescribed by VA. Cemeteries must be operated solely for the burial of service members who die on active duty, veterans, and their eligible spouses and dependent children. Any cemetery assisted by a VA grant must be maintained and operated according to the operational standards and measures of the National Cemetery Administration." (SOURCE: www.cem.va.gov)

The Department has not interred any person not meeting the requirements stipulated by the federal VA. No data is available on "non-qualifying veterans that have applied to be buried at the Cemetery" as this policy is consistent nationwide, has been longstanding and is understood by funeral homes and other entities that would advise a family during the loss of a loved one.

2:00-2:15 FLOOD RESPONSE EFFORT

3. Please provide an overview of the National Guard response to flood events including a description of the Guard units that assisted from other states, how additional resources helped the recovery efforts, and any feedback about the coordination process.

The Colorado National Guard's flood response can be separated into two phases, namely immediate response and recovery. Additional personnel and equipment for the first phase were provided by Wyoming Army National Guard (via the Emergency Management Assistance Compact, or EMAC) and the active duty component at Fort Carson (via immediate response authority). These forces consisted primarily of rotary wing aircraft and crew members who conducted rescue operations.

The EMAC assistance utilized in the recovery phase of the operation involved National Guard engineering elements from the states of Utah, Montana and Kansas. These states provided both equipment and personnel to allow for road repair while allowing Colorado National Guard members the opportunity to return to their jobs and families.

The EMAC process has existed since 1966 and this is a well-understood and successful process. The Department believes the process worked well during this emergency as it has during the previous two summers of wildfire activity, the blizzard of 2006, and during other significant incidents throughout Colorado's history.

2:15-2:30 DEPARTMENT UPDATES

4. Please provide a status update on the \$1.0 million General Fund appropriation for grants to veterans' organizations in FY 2012-13 and FY 2013-14. Include information on grant recipients, the amount available for administration of the grant program, and if that amount was sufficient in FY 2013-14.

The Veterans Assistance Grant has provided 18 grants in the last budget cycle that meet the intent of the General Assembly's footnote. The Department has requested this amount in FY 2015. The increase to the administrative percentage (3.0%, or \$30,000 for FY 2013-14) was necessary and sufficient to fund the FTE associated with this grant. The amount requested has exceeded the amount appropriated for the last two years.

Grant information is provided on the following page.

<i>FY2013-14 GF Grantee Information</i>	
<i>Grantee Organization</i>	<i>Amount</i>
<i>Alamosa County</i>	<i>\$20,200</i>
<i>Sobriety House</i>	<i>\$50,000</i>
<i>Pikes Peak Work Center</i>	<i>\$20,000</i>
<i>CO VET (Crawford House)</i>	<i>\$164,505</i>
<i>DAV Chapter 48</i>	<i>\$45,375</i>
<i>Providers Clearing House</i>	<i>\$34,800</i>
<i>DAV Chapter 44</i>	<i>\$32,120</i>
<i>Am Legion Post 203</i>	<i>\$12,000</i>
<i>American Military Family</i>	<i>\$20,000</i>
<i>Denver Options</i>	<i>\$10,000</i>
<i>Comitis Crisis Center</i>	<i>\$48,500</i>
<i>Catholic Charities</i>	<i>\$76,850</i>
<i>Bo Matthews Center</i>	<i>\$200,000</i>
<i>La Puente Home, Inc.</i>	<i>\$9,450</i>
<i>Providence Bible Chc, Inc.</i>	<i>\$37,200</i>
<i>Governor's Office</i>	<i>\$150,000</i>
<i>Park County Sr. Coalition</i>	<i>\$29,000</i>
<i>Am Legion Post 143</i>	<i>\$10,000</i>
<i>Total</i>	<i>\$970,000</i>

<i>FY 2012-13 GF Grantee Information</i>	
<i>Grantee Organization</i>	<i>Amount</i>
<i>Veterans Helping Veterans</i>	<i>\$44,980</i>
<i>DAV 48</i>	<i>\$24,192</i>
<i>Am Legion Post 108</i>	<i>\$20,000</i>
<i>Providers Clearing House</i>	<i>\$26,920</i>
<i>County VSO Training</i>	<i>\$16,000</i>
<i>DAV Chapter 44</i>	<i>\$10,400</i>
<i>Catholic Charities</i>	<i>\$64,470</i>
<i>El Paso Homeless Coalition</i>	<i>\$8,000</i>
<i>JeffCo Center Mental Health</i>	<i>\$99,500</i>

<i>Alamosa County</i>	<i>\$20,600</i>
<i>CO VET (Crawford House)</i>	<i>\$113,187</i>
<i>VFW Post 2461</i>	<i>\$10,005</i>
<i>Project Sanctuary</i>	<i>\$79,555</i>
<i>Am Legion Post 143</i>	<i>\$7,800</i>
<i>Park County Sr. Coalition</i>	<i>\$15,800</i>
<i>Am Legion Post 113</i>	<i>\$3,000</i>
<i>Denver Human Services</i>	<i>\$24,121</i>
<i>Sobriety House</i>	<i>\$25,000</i>
<i>Phoenix Multi-Sport</i>	<i>\$5,400</i>
<i>Denver Options</i>	<i>\$44,460</i>
<i>American Military Family</i>	<i>\$37,750</i>
<i>Freedom Service Dogs</i>	<i>\$25,000</i>
<i>Housing Solutions SW</i>	<i>\$43,235</i>
<i>Am Legion Post 1</i>	<i>\$19,000</i>
<i>VFW Post 1</i>	<i>\$66,000</i>
<i>VFW Post 4265</i>	<i>\$10,000</i>
<i>CO Judicial Department</i>	<i>\$107,625</i>
<i>Pikes Peak Work Center</i>	<i>\$8,000</i>
<i>Total</i>	<i>\$980,000</i>

- During the FY 2013-14 budget cycle, a Long Bill amendment added \$100,000 General Fund and 2.0 FTE to the Division of Veterans Affairs. Please provide an update on how these additional resources are being utilized, including any efficiencies in workload or response times.

Three of the four FTE (total) provided to the Division of Veterans Affairs have been hired as of this writing (the hiring of the final position is imminent). The addition of these personnel have allowed for a more efficient response to the consistently increasing workload within the Division (the Division saw a 47% increase in client visits in the last calendar year). These personnel have allowed the Department's intermittently staffed office at the Denver VA Regional Office to be staffed full time, providing greater support to the western metro region of Denver.

- Could the Department assist retired veterans in Custer County to obtain access at the Community Health Center? Can the Department provide any assistance in securing funding for EMT transport services for this community?

The Division of Veterans Affairs has met with Senator Aguilar and will engage the constituent group she met with in order to assist them in exploring what avenues of support can be provided by the federal government.

ADDENDUM: OTHER QUESTIONS FOR WHICH SOLELY WRITTEN RESPONSES ARE REQUESTED

1. Provide a list of any legislation that the Department has: (a) not implemented or (b) partially implemented. Explain why the Department has not implement or has partially implemented the legislation on this list.

N/A

2. Does Department have any outstanding high priority recommendations as identified in the "Annual Report of Audit Recommendations Not Fully Implemented" that was published by the State Auditor's Office on June 30, 2013? What is the department doing to resolve the outstanding high priority recommendations?

N/A

